

# Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association

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MEMBERS OF: CBIA – NFPA – ICC

Established 1972



## TESTIMONY OF JENNIFER JENNINGS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUPPORTING

### HB-5321, AAC THE VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS BEFORE THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MARCH 5, 2012

2011

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*The Connecticut Heating & Cooling Contractors Association (CHCC) submits the following comments supporting HB-5321:*

Over the years, CHCC has developed an invaluable working relationship with the technical high school system and we believe that our industry and the students have benefited from this relationship. Many of our current contractors and their apprentices are graduates of the state's technical high school system. CHCC has always believed in "giving back". CHCC maintains a "HVAC wish list", whereby we try to pair the needs for various pieces of the equipment or supplies within the technical high schools to our contractors who may be able to donate such. CHCC also works to provide annual scholarships to students pursuing the heating and cooling trade in the technical high school system. These scholarships are designed to enhance the educational and workforce opportunities available to the students of Connecticut while providing incentive to stay in the trade. These are just some examples of how the industry has worked to prop up and support the technical high school system in Connecticut because we believe that there is no better education system for students who wish to enter the skilled trades.

Likewise, CHCC believes that the state should continue to support this system to the fullest extent, and we believe that HB-5321 does just that. This legislation is necessary in order to prevent deterioration and future problems with funding and administration, which would have inevitably resulted from proposals like the one considered and fortunately scrapped last year. We believe that this current legislation moves in the right direction and will strengthen the state's ability to attract and retain students to pursue careers in the skilled trades, including heating, piping, and cooling work. ***CHCC suggests, however, that the bill be amended to ensure that the composition of the board reflects the occupational trades employer community. Specifically, CHCC suggests amending the bill to require that employer representatives have experience serving on a Trade and Technology Advisory Committee.*** Such an amendment would strengthen this bill and ensure that this educational system continues to provide exceptional service to students, HVAC employers, and residents throughout the state.

Thank you for the opportunity for us comment in support of the bill and for consideration of our proposed revisions.

*CHCC is a trade association whose objectives are to strengthen and further trade relations, attract, educate and train necessary manpower, represent members at all levels of government and review and establish quality standards and procedures. The association represents over 125 Heating & Cooling Companies in Connecticut.*